

33805

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ACTION PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-20 L-04 DODE-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 H-02 SS-20
 RSR-01 RSC-01 1054 W

R 311845Z MAR 70 ZFF-5
 FM AMEMBASSY ROME
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4375
 INFO USMISSION NATO
 USNMR/SHAPE/BRUSSELS
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 CINCUSNAVEUR/LONDON

113836

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 1571

SUBJECT: PM RE PINCUS/PAUL TRIP

REF: STATE 023736

1. AMBASSADOR RECEIVED WALTER PINCUS AT RESIDENCE MARCH 28 FOR ONE HOUR CONVERSATION. THEY DWELT PRINCIPALLY ON PINCUS' CONCERNES OF MIDDLE EAST, EVENTS OF RECENT YEARS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, AND WAY IN WHICH SYMINGTON SUBCOMMITTEE IS HANDLING CURRENT BRIEFLINGS. RELATIVELY LITTLE DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO EUROPE.

2. QUESTIONS ASKED BY PINCUS WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE HE IS REPORTED TO HAVE POSED IN OTHER EUROPEAN STOPS: HOW DOES ITALY VIEW INEVITABLE CUTS THAT ARE GOING TO BE MADE IN US FORCES IN EUROPE? HOW DOES ITALY REGARD SOVIET THREAT? WHAT DOES ITALY CONTRIBUTE IN MEDITERRANEAN AND WHAT IS POSSIBILITY OF ITALY DOING MORE? DOES ITALY BELIEVE CURRENT US VIETNAMIZATION POLICY PORTENDS SIMILAR POLICY TOWARD EUROPE? PINCUS ONLY TOUCHED ON REDCOSTE, AND WAS INFORMED THAT PROGRAM WAS PROCEEDING AS SCH EDULED.

3. AMBASSADOR BRIEFLY SKETCHED POLITICAL SITUATION IN ITALY, SAYING THAT ITALIANS WILL FACE WITHIN NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS

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 BASIC DECISIONS WHERE THEY GO FROM HERE IN DETERMINING HOW TO GOVERN THEIR COUNTRY, AND THAT THESE DECISIONS WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY ITALIAN CONCLUSIONS ON STEADFASTNESS OF AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO ALLIANCE. SINCE THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT HAS MADE NO DECISION ON FUTURE LEVEL OF US FORCES IN EUROPE, TO DESCRIBE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH CUTS AS "INEVITABLE" WAS NOT ONLY INACCURATE BUT COULD BE DOWNRIGHT MISCHIEVOUS AND SERIOUSLY DAMAGING TO LONGRANGE US INTERESTS. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HE DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY OF REDUCTIONS IN THE TIME FRAME OF THE WHOLE DECADE OF THE SEVENTIES, BUT SUCH REDUCTIONS SHOULD OCCUR, IF AT ALL, ONLY AFTER THE MOSE SEARCHING AND THROUGH REVIEW WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE ALLIANCE MACHINERY.

4. THE AMBASSADOR SAID ITALIANS REGARDED SOVIET THREAT AS BASICALLY UNCHANGED. HE REFERRED TO PRESIDENT SARAGAT'S RECENT VISIT TO YUGOSLAVIA AND POINTED OUT THAT YUGO ESTIMATE, AS GIVEN TO ITALIANS, WAS THAT SOVIET HIERARCHY WAS AS INFLEXIBLE AS EVER WITH ITS BASIC GOALS UNCHANGED.

5. ITALY, THE AMBASSADOR SAID, HAS FULLY ENGAGED ITS MILITARY FORCE WITHIN THE ALLIANCE STRUCTURE. IT CONTRIBUTES A GREAT DEAL WITHIN THE LIMITS OF ITS ACTUAL CAPABILITIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. FAR MORE THAN IT IS GENERALLY GIVEN CREDIT FOR. ITALY COULD BE PERSUADED TO DO MORE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN IF THE STRATEGY OF THE ALLIANCE, SO LONG CENTERED ON THE EAST GERMAN FRONTIER, COULD BE REVISED TO MORE ACCURATELY REFLECT THE PRESENT DIMENSIONS OF THE SOVIET THREAT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN. HE HOPED THAT BOTH THE UNITED STATES AND THE ALLIANCE MACHINERY WOULD ADDRESS THIS PROBLEM IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

6. THE AMBASSADOR OBSERVED THAT HE THOUGHT THE ITALIAN UNDERSTANDING OF THE CURRENT US POLICY OF VIETNAMIZATION WAS AT LEAST AS ACCURATE AS THAT OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE. IT WAS NOT INTERPRETED AS "WITHDRAWAL" BUT AS A SCALING DOWN OF A DIRECT AMERICAN MILITARY INVOLVEMENT WHICH, GIVEN THE KIND OF WAR IT WAS, PROBABLY WAS TOO LARGE IN THE FIRST PLACE. HAVING READ THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE CONGRESS, THEY ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT THE AMERICAN COMMITMENT TO EUROPE WAS UNCHANGED.

7. THE ITALIANS DID WORRY, OF COURSE, OVER THE SPATE OF

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SPECULATIVE JOURNALISTIC REPORTAGE ON "REDUCTIONS IN EUROPE." THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT THIS HAD NOT YET DONE SERIOUS DAMAGE, ALTHOUGH THE POTENTIAL FOR VERY GRAVE DAMAGE WAS ALWAYS PRESENT. HE SAID HE DID NOT ENVY PINCUS THE BURDEN THAT MUST BE ON HIS CONSCIENCE WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THE WAY FUTURE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS ON EUROPE WERE CONDUCTED COULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE AMERICAN SECURITY IF NOT HANDLED WITH GREAT BALANCE AND OBJECTIVITY. HE SAID HE COULD NOT STRESS TOO STRONGLY THE DANGER IN ERODING CONFIDENCE IN THE VALIDITY OF AMERICAN COMMITMENTS.

8. PINCUS SAID SUBCOMMITTEE STAFF HAS CONCENTRATED ON EDUCATING ITS SEVEN MEMBERS TO WHAT EXISTING POLICIES ARE AND HOW THEY WORK, RATHER THAN STARTING WITH EXAMINATION OF WHAT POLICIES SHOULD BE. THIS WILL COME LATER. HE ACKNOWLEDGED DANGER THAT BY APPROACHING HEARINGS IN THIS WAY, THEY CAN BE USED TO UNDERMINE ESSENTIAL US INTEREST ABROAD.

9. PINCUS NEITHER REQUESTED NOR WAS SHOWN ANY DOCUMENTS.
GP-3.
MARTIN

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